

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An alarm transfer method in a wide area Ethernet network which has Ethernet networks each for accommodating client lines from client terminals and a plurality of types of transmission networks for connecting said Ethernet networks to one another, said alarm transfer method used for mutually notifying said client terminals placed in communication that a fault occurs in said wide area Ethernet network, said alarm transfer method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

dividing an Ethernet frame sent from one of said client terminal terminals every predetermined fixed length to generate a plurality of fixed-length frames;

generating a capsule comprised of each of said fixed-length frames, a type field for notifying a fault occurring on one of said client lines, a forward relay line fault notification field for notifying a second fault occurring in said transmission network networks in a forward direction, and a backward relay line fault notification field for notifying the second fault in a backward direction;

multiplexing said generated capsules for each of a plurality of Ethernet paths set between client terminals placed in communication to generate a frame adapted for said transmission network networks, and transferring said frame to an Ethernet network which accommodates a destination client terminal; and

demultiplexing said respective capsules from ~~the~~ a received frame, and referencing said type field, said forward relay line fault notification field, and said backward relay line fault notification field to recognize the fault occurring on said one client line or the fault occurring in said transmission network networks for each of said Ethernet paths.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising
~~the steps of:~~

transferring said forward relay line fault notification down to an egress node which is
comprises an edge node of an Ethernet network that accommodates the destination client
terminal; and

issuing a backward relay line fault notification corresponding to said forward relay
line fault notification from said egress node to an ingress node which is comprises an edge
node of an Ethernet network that accommodates a source client terminal.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein:
said egress node, upon detection of said forward relay line fault notification, sets a
client line downstream of a corresponding Ethernet path to link-down when said forward
relay line fault notification is not cleared even after lapse of a predetermined protection time,
and
said ingress node, upon detection of said backward relay line fault notification, sets a
client line upstream of a corresponding Ethernet path to link-down.

4. (Currently Amended) A wide area Ethernet network having Ethernet
networks each for accommodating client lines from client terminals, and a plurality of types
of transmission networks for interconnecting said Ethernet networks, wherein a fault
occurring on one of said client line lines or in said transmission network networks is mutually
notified between said client terminals placed in communication, said wide area Ethernet
network comprising:

a multiplexer which functions as an edge node of said Ethernet network networks,
wherein:

 said multiplexer, upon receipt of an Ethernet frame sent from one of said client terminals, divides said Ethernet frame every predetermined fixed length to generate a plurality of fixed-length frames, generates a capsule comprised of each of said fixed-length frames, a type field for notifying a fault occurring on one of said client lines, a forward relay line fault notification field for notifying a second fault occurring in said transmission network networks in a forward direction, and a backward relay line fault notification field for notifying the second fault in a backward direction, multiplexes said generated capsules for each of a plurality of Ethernet paths set between client terminals placed in communication to generate a frame adapted for said transmission network networks, and transfers said frame to an Ethernet network which accommodates a destination client terminal; and

 said multiplexer, upon receipt of a frame from said transmission network networks, demultiplexes said respective capsules from said frame for each of the Ethernet paths set between the client terminals placed in communication, and references said type field, said forward relay line fault notification field, and said backward relay line fault notification field to recognize the fault occurring on said one client line or the fault occurring in said transmission network networks for each of said Ethernet paths.

5. (Currently Amended) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 4,
wherein:

 said multiplexer issues said forward relay line fault notification to an egress node which is comprises an edge node of an Ethernet network that accommodates a destination

client terminal when said multiplexer operates as an ingress node which is comprises an edge node of an Ethernet network that accommodates a source client terminal; and

 said multiplexer, upon detection of said forward relay line fault notification, issues a backward relay line fault notification corresponding to said forward relay line fault notification toward said ingress node, when said multiplexer operates as said egress node.

6. (Currently Amended) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 5, wherein:

 said multiplexer, upon detection of said forward relay line fault notification, forcefully sets a client line downstream of a corresponding Ethernet path to link-down when said forward relay line fault notification is not cleared even after lapse of a predetermined protection time when said multiplexer operates as said egress node, and

 said multiplexer, upon detection of said backward relay line fault notification, immediately sets a client line upstream of a corresponding Ethernet path forcefully to link-down when said multiplexer operates as said ingress node.

7. (Currently Amended) A wide area Ethernet network comprising:
 an ingress node for dividing a higher-level protocol data sent from each of a plurality of client terminals every predetermined fixed length to generate a plurality of fixed-length frames, generating a capsule comprised of each of said fixed-length frames, a CRC field for detecting whether or not the data sent from said each client terminal is normal, a type field for notifying a fault occurring on a client line, a forward relay line fault notification field for notifying a second fault occurring in a transmission network in a forward direction, and a backward relay line fault notification field for notifying said second fault in a backward

direction, multiplexing said capsules in a predefined order and adding an FCS field for detecting whether or not data in said capsules is normal to generate a multiplexed MAC frame, and sending said multiplexed MAC frame; and

an egress node for detecting a defective data reception for each Ethernet path of a plurality of Ethernet paths from the result of checking said CRC field added to said fixed-length frame, detecting a relay line fault in the forward direction and in the backward direction for each Ethernet path from information in said type field, said forward relay line fault notification field, and said backward relay line fault notification field, identifying an alarm for a path network layer from said detected defective data reception and said relay line fault information, detecting a defective data reception for each forward relay line and backward relay line from the result of checking said FCS field added to said multiplexed MAC frame, and detecting loss of signal and link-down for each line to identify an alarm for a transmission medium network layer.

8. (Original) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 7, further comprising:

a relay node for relaying said multiplexed MAC frame transmitted/received between said ingress node and said egress node by multiplexing frames defined by SONET/SDH into said multiplexed MAC frame or demultiplexing said multiplexed MAC frame into said SONET/SDH defined frames, identifying an alarm on a path-by-path basis from a POH byte defined by said SONET/SDH, and identifying an alarm on a section-by-section basis from an SOH byte defined by said SONET/SDH.

9. (Original) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 7, wherein said multiplexed MAC frame comprises a multiplexed MAC frame header placed at top of said multiplexed capsules, said header including a sequence number, a K1 byte, a K2 byte, and an HEC field.

10. (Currently Amended) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 9, wherein:

 said ingress node and said egress node are connected through an active line and a spare line, and each generate an SD signal and an SF signal from the results of said defective data reception, said loss-of-signal detection, and said link-down detection detected for each line; and

 said ingress node and said egress node each generate a K1 byte and a K2 byte to be transmitted from the K1 byte and K2 byte received thereby and the SD signal and the SF signal for each active line and spare line, store said a transmission-related K1 byte and K2 byte in said multiplexed MAC frame header for transmission, and make a determination for switching a line to which said multiplexed MAC frame is delivered between said active line and said spare line, and switch the line to which said multiplexed MAC frame is delivered from a result of the determination.

11. (Original) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 8, wherein:

 said multiplexed MAC frame has a multiplexed MAC frame header placed at top of said multiplexed capsules, said header including a sequence number, a K1 byte, a K2 byte, and an HEC field.

12. (Currently Amended) The wide area Ethernet network according to claim 11, wherein:

 said ingress node and said egress node are connected through an active line and a spare line;

 said ingress node and said relay node are connected through an active line and a spare line;

 said egress node and said relay node are connected through an active line and a spare line;

 each of said ingress node, said egress node, and said relay node generates an SD signal and an SF signal from a result of said defective data reception, said loss of signal, and said link-down detected for each line, and

 each of said ingress node, said egress node, and said relay node generates a K1 byte and a K2 byte to be transmitted from the K1 byte and K2 byte received thereby and the SD signal and the SF signal for each line, stores ~~said a~~ transmission-related K1 byte and K2 byte in said multiplexed MAC frame header for transmission, and makes a determination for switching a line to which said multiplexed MAC frame is delivered between said active ~~route~~ line and said spare ~~route~~ line, and switches the line to which said multiplexed MAC frame is delivered from a result of the determination.

13. (Currently Amended) An Ethernet multiplexer for relaying information transmitted/received between Ethernet networks for accommodating client lines from client terminals and a plurality of types of transmission networks for connecting said Ethernet networks to each other, said Ethernet multiplexer serving as an edge node of each of said Ethernet networks, comprising:

a GbE_MAC processing circuit for transmitting and receiving a frame to and from said transmission networks, and for detecting a fault occurring on any of said transmission networks;

a TDM_MUX/DEMUX circuit for time-division-multiplexing or demultiplexing frames transmitted in an upstream direction or in a downstream direction in units of a plurality of Ethernet paths set between client terminals placed in communication;

an FE_MAC processing circuit for detecting transmission/reception of an Ethernet frame to/from one of said client lines, and detecting a fault occurring on said one client line; and

a GBP processing circuit, in response to a received Ethernet frame sent from one of said client terminals, for dividing said Ethernet frame every predetermined length to generate fixed-length frames, generating a capsule including a core block ~~composed of~~ comprising each of said fixed-length frames and a type field added thereto for notifying a fault occurring on said one client line, a forward relay line fault notification field for notifying a second fault occurring in said transmission networks in a forward direction, and a backward relay line fault notification field for notifying said second fault in a backward direction, said GBP processing circuit, upon detection of a fault occurring on one of said client lines, adding a code indicative of the fault on said one client line to said type field, and overwriting a payload with a predefined idle frame, said GBP processing circuit, upon receipt of a frame from one of said transmission networks, monitors said core block, said forward relay line fault notification field, and said backward relay line fault notification field, respectively, to identify a fault occurring on said one client line or a fault occurring in said transmission networks for each of said Ethernet paths.

14. (Currently Amended) The Ethernet multiplexer according to claim 13, wherein:

said GBP processing circuit issues said forward relay line fault notification to an egress node which is comprises an edge node of an Ethernet network that accommodates a destination client terminal when said GBP processing circuit operates as an ingress node which is comprises an edge node of an Ethernet network that accommodates a source client terminal; and

said GBP processing circuit, upon detection of said forward relay line fault notification, issues a backward relay line fault notification corresponding to said forward relay line fault notification toward said ingress node when said GBP processing circuit operates as said egress node.

15. (Original) The Ethernet multiplexer according to claim 14, wherein:

said GBP processing circuit, upon detection of said forward relay line fault notification, forcefully sets a client line downstream of a corresponding Ethernet path to link-down when said fault notification is not cleared even after lapse of a predetermined protection time when said GBP multiplexer operates as said egress node, and

said GBP multiplexer, upon detection of said backward relay line fault notification, immediately sets a client line upstream of a corresponding Ethernet path forcefully to link-down when said GBP multiplexer operates as said ingress node.

16. (Currently Amended) An Ethernet multiplexer for relaying a capsule transmitted/received between Ethernet networks each for accommodating client lines from client terminals and a transmission network for interconnecting said Ethernet networks, said

capsule including a type field for notifying a fault occurring on one of said client lines, a forward relay line fault notification field for notifying a second fault occurring in said transmission network in a forward direction, and a backward relay line fault notification field for notifying said second fault in a backward direction, said Ethernet multiplexer comprising:

- a terminator circuit for transmitting/receiving frames to/from said transmission network, and detecting a line fault in said transmission network;
- a TDM_MUX/DEMUX circuit for time-division-multiplexing or demultiplexing frames transmitted in an upstream direction or in a downstream direction in a predefined order in units of a plurality of Ethernet paths which are set between client terminals placed in communication;
- a MAC processing circuit for transmitting/receiving frames to/from said Ethernet networks, and detecting a line fault in said Ethernet networks; and
- a GBP relay processing circuit for relaying said capsule for each of said Ethernet paths, and in response to a fault detected by said terminator circuit or said MAC processing circuit, setting a code indicative of the presence of a line fault in said forward relay line fault notification field, setting a code indicative of the absence of a line fault in said backward relay line fault notification field, setting a code indicative of no fault on said client lines in said type field, and setting a predefined idle frame in a payload.

17. (New) An alarm transfer method in a wide area Ethernet network which has Ethernet networks each for accommodating client lines from client terminals and a plurality of types of transmission networks for connecting said Ethernet networks to one another, said alarm transfer method comprising:

dividing an Ethernet frame sent from one of said client terminals every predetermined fixed length to generate a plurality of fixed-length frames; and

generating a capsule comprised of each of said fixed-length frames, a type field for notifying a fault occurring on one of said client lines, a forward relay line fault notification field for notifying a second fault occurring in said transmission networks in a forward direction, and a backward relay line fault notification field for notifying the second fault in a backward direction.

18. (New) The alarm transfer method in a wide area Ethernet network according to claim 17, further comprising:

multiplexing said generated capsules for each of a plurality of Ethernet paths set between client terminals placed in communication to generate a frame for said transmission networks, and transferring said frame to an Ethernet network which accommodates a destination client terminal.

19. (New) The alarm transfer method in a wide area Ethernet network according to claim 18, further comprising:

demultiplexing respective capsules from a received frame, and referencing said type field, said forward relay line fault notification field, and said backward relay line fault notification field to recognize the fault occurring on said one client line or the fault occurring in said transmission networks for each of said Ethernet paths.